

What is a Civil Harassment Restraining Order?

It is a court order that helps protect people from harassment.

Can I get a Civil Harassment Restraining Order?

You can ask for one if you are worried about your safety because someone:

- Stalked
- Harassed
- Sexually assaulted *or*
- Threatened you with violence.

How will the order help me?

The court can order a person to:

- Not harass or threaten you
- Not contact or go near you *and*
- Not have a gun

You can also ask for protection for other family or household members.

What forms do I need to get the order?

Fill out Forms CH-100 and CH-120. Then file them with the court clerk.

Where can I get these forms?

You can get the forms at any courthouse or county law library at: www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms

How soon can I get the order?

If you ask for a temporary restraining order (Form CH-120), the court will decide within 24 hours whether or not to make the order. Sometimes the court decides sooner.

How long does the order last?

If the court makes a temporary order, it will last until your hearing date. At that time, the court will decide to continue or cancel the order. The order could last for up to 3 years.

How will the person to be restrained know about the order?

Someone over 18 years of age—not you or anyone else protected by the order— must “serve” (give) the person to be restrained a copy of the order. For help with service, ask the court clerk for Form CH-135.

What if the restrained person does not obey the order?

Call the police. The restrained person can be arrested and charged with a crime.

How much does it cost?

That depends on the type of harassment. If the restrained person has used or threatened to use violence against you or has stalked you, you do not have to pay a filing fee.

If you cannot afford to pay the filing fee, ask the clerk how to apply for a fee waiver.

You are entitled to free service of the court’s order by a sheriff or marshal, if the order is based on fear of sexual assault or stalking. Use Form CH-101 to request free service. If you are not eligible for free service, you may pay the sheriff or marshal to serve the order.

The court can make the person who loses the case pay all the court fees and the lawyer’s fees for the other party.

Requests for Accommodations

Assistive listening systems, computer-assisted real-time captioning, or sign language interpreter services are available upon request if at least 5 days notice is provided. Contact the clerk’s office for *Request for Accommodations by Persons with Disabilities and Order* (form MC-410). (Civil Code, § 54.8.)



Do I have to go to court?

Yes. Go to court on the date the clerk gives you.

Do I need a lawyer?

No. But it is a good idea. Ask the court clerk about free and low-cost legal services and self-help centers in your county.

Do I need to bring a witness to the court hearing?

No. But it helps to have proof of the harassment. You can bring:

- A written statement from witnesses made under oath
- Witnesses
- Photos
- Medical or police reports
- Damaged property
- Threatening letters, e-mails, or telephone messages

The court may or may not let witnesses speak at the hearing. So, if possible, you should bring witnesses' written statements under oath to the hearing. (You can use Form MC-030 for this.)

Will I see the restrained person at the court hearing?

If the person comes to the hearing, yes. But that person does not have the right to speak to you. If you are afraid, tell the court officer.

Can I bring someone with me to court?

Yes. You can bring someone to sit with you during the hearing. But that person cannot speak for you in court. Only you or your lawyer (if you have one) can speak for you.

What if I don't speak English?

When you file your papers, ask the clerk if a court interpreter is available. You may have to pay a fee for the interpreter. If the interpreter is not available for your court date, bring someone to interpret for you. You cannot ask a child under 18 to interpret for you.

What if I am deaf?

If you are deaf, contact the clerk at least 5 days before the hearing. Ask for an interpreter or other accommodation. (See information on Requests for Accommodations at the bottom of page 1.)

What if I move?

Your restraining order works anywhere in the United States. If you move out of California, contact your new local police so they will know about your orders.

Need more information?

Ask the court clerk about free or low-cost legal help.

For help in your area, contact:

[Local information may be inserted.]